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## THE LOST MOSAICS OF ROME IV TO IX CENTURY:

[PLATE VIII.]

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**THE VATICAN BASILICA.**—When Constantine built the basilica of St. Peter, the main decoration of the interior consisted of mosaics, with which the greater part of the walls were covered. The apse mosaic was restored under Severinus (c. 640) and Innocent III (1198–1216), and existed until the basilica was destroyed to make way for the new edifice; that on the triumphal arch and remnants of those on the walls of the transept were still seen and described at the beginning of the XVI century. As to the nave, the tradition which asserts them to have had a mosaic decoration which was replaced by the frescos of Pope Formosus (891–96), rests on very uncertain foundations. A Constantinian mosaic certainly existed on the façade, as Comm. de Rossi has recently proved, and it was replaced by that of Gregory IX (1227–41).

The earliest of the mosaics of the Vatican basilica about which we have much information is, without doubt, that which was placed on the triumphal arch, and which Prof. Frothingham was so fortunately able to reconstruct from a text of the XVI century. As this remarkable example of the mosaic painting of the fourth century has been described in detail by my learned American fellow-worker, I shall limit myself to a reference to his essay published in the *Revue Archéologique* of Jan.–Feb. 1883.<sup>1</sup>

I myself have given in the same Review (Nov. 1878, Aug. 1879 and Sept. 1882) a detailed study of the mosaic of the apse, to which it will be necessary only to refer.<sup>2</sup>

**VATICAN BAPTISTERY.**—Another mosaic of the fourth century is known only from a description in the poems of Prudentius; it was

<sup>1</sup> *Une mosaïque Constantinienne inconnue à Saint-Pierre de Rome.*

<sup>2</sup> *Notes sur les Mosaïques Chrétiennes de l'Italie. VI. Des éléments antiques dans les mosaïques romaines du Moyen Âge.*

placed in the baptistery built by St. Damasus (366–84), if we are to believe the palatine manuscript cited by Gruter :

*Ad Fontes.*

NON HAEC HVMANIS OPIBVS NON ARTE MAGISTRA  
SED PRAESTANTE PETRO CVI TRADITA JANVA COELI  
EST ANTISTES XPI COMPOSVIT DAMASVS  
VNA PETRI SEDES VNVM VERVMQVE LAVACRYM  
VINCVLÀ NVLLA TENEAT. AGATHIVS VOTVM SOLVIT.<sup>3</sup>

Some well-known verses, composed by the pontiff, allude to the works which he had undertaken in order to conduct to the Baptistery the water that was damaging the tombs of the martyrs. They are among the most elegant of his poetical productions :

“Cingebant latices montem teneroque meatu  
Corpora multorum, cineres, atque ossa rigabant.  
Non tulit hoc Damasus, communi lege sepultos  
Post requiem, tristes iterum persolvere poenas,” etc.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, the verses of Prudentius often cited since the XVI century describe the subject of the mosaics executed in this sanctuary :

“Interior tumuli pars est, ubi lapsibus sonoris  
Stagnum nivali volvitur profundo.  
Omnicolor vitreas pictura superne tingit undas  
Musci relucent, et virescit aurum  
Cyaneusque latex umbram trahit imminentis ostri.  
Credas, moveri fluctibus lacunar.  
Pastor oves alit ipse illic gelidi rigore fontis  
Videt sitire quas fluentia Christi.”<sup>5</sup>

The Good Shepherd feeding his flock, is a subject quite often represented in the primitive mosaics. It occurs, among other instances, in the mosaics that filled one of the small apses of the portico of San Venanzio (*pastores armenta pascentes*), which we may suppose resembled the fifth-century mosaic remaining in one of the apses of San Lorenzo at Milan, and in that of the mausoleum of Galla Placidia, at Ravenna. Commendatore de Rossi is inclined to think that the mosaics represented also marine subjects: “scene di mare,” *e. g.*, a

<sup>3</sup> *Corpus Inscr. Rom.* 1163, No. 10.

<sup>4</sup> This inscription is preserved in the Vatican crypts, and bears the number 47.

<sup>5</sup> *Prudentii Carmina*: Rome, 1789, p. 1194: LIB. ΠΕΡΙΣΤΕΦΑΝΩΝ. Hym. XII, 38, etc.

tempest-tossed vessel; this he gathers from this inscription formerly placed on the very spot where Damasus anointed the faithful on emerging from the water :

TV CRUCE SVSCEPTA MVNDI VITARE PROCELLAS

DISCE MAGIS MONITVS HAC RATIONE LOCI.<sup>6</sup>

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF SANTA CROCE.**—We learn from the *Liber Pontificalis* that Pope Symmachus (498–514) ordered the construction, in the Vatican basilica, of the oratory of the Holy Cross: “Item (fecit) ad fontem in basilica S. Petri apostoli oratorium sanctae Crucis ex argento, confessionem, et crucem ex auro cum gemmis, ubi inelaudit lignum Dominicum, ipsa crux pens. libras x.”<sup>7</sup>

The papal chronicle does not add any information as to the mosaics that adorned the oratory having been executed under the auspices of this pope: this is first asserted by a mediæval writer, Petrus Mallius, who was a canon of the basilica in the XII century and wrote a well-known description of it: “Ecclesia sanctae Crucis, quam construi fecit beatae recordationis Symachus Papa, cujus absidam columnis porfireticis, et optimo musivo decoravit et decem libras ligni sanctae crucis in ea recondidit.”<sup>8</sup> May not Mallius have taken for the work of Symmachus what was in reality that of Leo III? I am rather inclined to think so, and this on account of a document but slightly posterior to Leo III, and consequently a far greater authority than Mallius, I mean the *Liber Pontificalis*, which attributes positively to the contemporary of Charlemagne the execution of the mosaics of the apse of this oratory: “Oratorium sanctae crucis quod jam prae nimia vetustate erat ruiturum simul cum absida novo aedificio erexit et ad perfectum usque perduxit, atque ipsam absidam ex musivo diverso decoratam picturis atque marmoribus miro splendore ornavit” (*in vita Leonis III*, § LXVI).

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF SAN MICHELE.**—Mallius, Vegius, Panvinio and Ciampini mention the mosaics which adorned the altar of the Archangel Michael, situated in the portico before the church of Santa Petronilla (plan of Alfarano, No. 154): “Templum Sanctae Petronillae ante quod est Basilica Sancti Angeli, quae vocatur Vaticanum, mirifico mosibo laqueatum auro et vitro.”<sup>9</sup> “*De oratorio*

<sup>6</sup> *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*; 1867, p. 88, fig. p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, p. 261. Cf. Note 21 on p. 266.

<sup>8</sup> *Descriptio basilicae Vaticanae*, ed. de Angelis, p. 124.

<sup>9</sup> P. Mallius, *op. cit.* ed. de Angelis, p. 58.

*sanctae Michaëlis archangeli.* Ante templum sanctae Petronillae versus murum ecclesiae fuit sacellum, sive aedicula sancti Michaëlis archangeli, dicta in Vaticano, auratis laquearibus ornata, musivo vitreoque opere decorata, quae diu ante exolevit: remansit vero tantum altare dictum sancti Michaëlis, quod etiam hodie amplius non extat. Sic P. Mallius et M. Vegius."<sup>10</sup> "C. Litera haec ecclesiam Sancti Andreae a Symmacho papa constructam designat, de qua etiam egimus supra sub numero  $\frac{1}{3}$  . . Tria in eadem erant altaria . . secundum ad dexteram D. Michaeli arcangelo dedicatum, ac S. Angeli Vaticani nomine insignitum, musivoque opere erat ornatum."<sup>11</sup>

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF SANTA LUCIA.**—The author of the description of the Vatican basilica as it existed in the latter half of the XII century, Petrus Mallius (*op. cit.* p. 125), attributes to Gregory the Great (590–604) the mosaics of the oratory of Santa Lucia, situated on the right before reaching the confession of St. Peter and near *San Giovanni ad fontes*: "Ante ecclesiam sancti Joannis ad Fontes ad oratorium sanctae Luciae, quod, ut a nostris accipimus, consecravit beatus Gregorius Papa, et ejus venerabile brachium in eo recondidit, et parietes illius, ut apparet, musivo depinxit."

De Angelis, the editor of Mallius, relates (*loc. cit.*) that he himself had seen, "in vestigio antiquo hujus Basilicae," the following inscription: ALTARE S. LVCIAE VIRGINIS A GEGORIO (*sic*) PRIMO. The existence of such a document, if it were well established, would tend to confirm the assertion of Mallius.

Panvinio, who also speaks of the antiquity of the chapel dedicated to Santa Lucia, places it in a different part of the basilica.<sup>12</sup>

**VATICAN BASILICA.—FAÇADE OF THE ATRIUM.**—Pope Sergius (687–701) restored the partially ruined mosaics of the façade of the atrium: "Hic musivum, quod ex parte in fronte atrii ejusdem basilicae fuerat dirutum innovavit."<sup>13</sup> These mosaics probably belonged to the time of Constantine himself.

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF JOHN THE SEVENTH (705-8).**—The mosaics of this oratory have been studied in a special article pub-

<sup>10</sup> Panvinio, *apud* Mai, *Spicilegium Romanum*, t. IX, p. 260.

<sup>11</sup> Ciampini, *De Sacris Aedificiis*, p. 93. Cf. Mignanti, *Istoria della sacrosanta patriarcale Basilica Vaticana*, t. I, p. 129.

<sup>12</sup> *De septem urbis ecclesiis*, p. 46.

<sup>13</sup> *Lib. Pont., in vita Sergii XI*, ed. Duchesne, t. I, p. 375. Cf. Panvinio *apud* Mai, *Spicilegium Romanum*, t. IX, p. 233.

lished in the *Revue Archéologique*, September, 1877: we refer our readers to it for details.

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF THE VIRGIN.**—According to the *Liber Pontificalis*, Gregory III (731–41) caused to be constructed in the Basilica of Saint Peter, near the triumphal arch, in the space reserved for the men, an oratory dedicated to the Virgin.<sup>14</sup> Mallius adds (*op. cit.*, p. 15) that, by the side of the altar to the Mother of Christ, another altar was raised in honor of Saint Gabinius. Neither of them mentions the mosaics which the oratory owed to Gregory III. Panvinio is the first who speaks of them (*op. cit.*, p. 42): “Octavum oratorium cum duobus altaribus S. Mariae et S. Gabinii a parte transversae crucis sub arcu majore, prope chorum canonicorum, in media cruce existentem, fuit beatae Mariae a Gregorio III fabricatum [et] dedicatum, pulcherrimis musiveis figuris condecoratum . . . in quo ipse, Eugeniusque III, qui illud restituit, sepulti fuere.”

The last phrase shows that the oratory served as a burial-place for both Gregory III and Eugenius III. This circumstance raises some doubt in my mind regarding the assertion of Panvinio. In fact Mallius and, later, Mapheus Vegius tell us that the tomb of the first of these pontiffs was adorned with mosaics. It is questionable whether these mosaics were distinct from those which the learned Veronese monk mentions: he may have taken the mosaics of the tomb of Gregory III, executed probably a short while after his death, to be the work of this pope. This kind of mosaic, instead of relating to the life of the defunct, represented ordinarily the same general subjects, so that such a confusion would not be improbable.

Leaving this question unsettled, I will cite the passages of Mallius and Vegius just alluded to. Mallius says (*ubi supra*): “Hic itaque summus Papa Gregorius tertius requiescit in loco illo, ubi nunc felicis memoriae beatus Eugenius Papa tertius requiescit. Ubi etiam ad honorem ejusdem Gregorii Papae fuit erectus arcus optime mosaico depictus et permansit usque ad tempora Domini Eugenii tertii Papae.” Vegius says: “Extat adhuc titulus Eugenii III marmori impressus. Deperiit enim Gregorii III, et titulus qui erat hujusmodi, TERTIVS HIC PAPA GREGORIVS EST TVMVLATVS, et arcus simul qui illi erat erectus, ex nobili mosaico depictum.”<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *In vita Gregorii III*, § VI.

<sup>15</sup> *De rebus antiquis memorabilibus Basilicae S. Petri Romae*, in the *Acta Sanctorum* for June, t. VII, p. 83.

To the restorations undertaken in this oratory by Eugenius III must be added those of Cardinal Lorenzo, nephew of Innocent VIII, who renewed it in 1495.<sup>16</sup>

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF SANTA MARIA IN TURRI.**—Three mosaics were executed under the pontificate of Paul I (757–67). One of them decorated the oratory of the Virgin, popularly termed “de’ Cancelli,” in the Vatican basilica. It has long since disappeared, without leaving any traces but the more or less meaningless epithets bestowed on it by the authors of the Middle Ages or of the Renaissance:<sup>17</sup> the very subject which it represented is unknown. The second, which was in the church built near the monastery of SS. Stephen and Silvester, met with a similar fate.<sup>18</sup> As for the third, in the Oratory of Santa Maria in Turri, it seems to have almost entirely escaped the notice of archæologists,<sup>19</sup> though a detailed ms. description and even a drawing of it are preserved: it is to this work that the following lines refer.

It is known that, on the erection of the new edifice, many of the ancient monuments belonging to the old basilica were designed and painted on the walls of certain parts of the crypt, in order to preserve some memory of them. Such a reproduction of this mosaic existed in the time of Torrigio (c. 1625), in the chapel of Santa Maria del Portico: this probably had been executed but a few years before the time when he wrote. He says: “Appresso scorgesi depinta la facciata antica di mosaico, e l’immagine del Salvatore, che stava già nell’ Oratorio di S. Maria in Laborario, ò *Inter Turres*, ò *In turribus*, ò *In turri*, ò *in Atrio*: detta così perche stava nel cortile, e tra il campanile, e una certa Torre chiamata *Turris S. Justini*. . . . Vi si legge: *Opus musivum Salvatoris Oratorii S. Mariæ in Turri à S. Paolo I.*”<sup>20</sup>

The *Liber Pontificalis*, even, mentions this work, without however

<sup>16</sup> Severano, *Memorie sacre delle sette chiese*, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, t. I, pp. 465, 467; P. Mallius, *op. cit.*, p. 50; M. Vegius, *op. cit.*, p. 82; Panvinus, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> *Lib. Pont.*, ed. Duchesne, t. I, p. 464.

<sup>19</sup> Besides the reference to it by Torrigio, it has been mentioned incidentally and with many errors in some little-known works. Bonnani, *Templi Vaticani historia*, p. 145; Marangoni, *Storia della cappella . . . di San Lorenzo*, 1747, p. 179; R. de Bus-sière, *Les sept Basiliques de Rome*. More recently it is mentioned and inadequately published in Garrucci’s great work, *Storia dell’ Arte Cristiana*, vol. I, in his chronology, under Paul I.

<sup>20</sup> Torrigio, *Le Sacre Grotte Vaticane*: Roma, 1639, p. 112.

expressly using the word mosaic. This passage is not given in all the MSS., but in one of the most important of them preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale and dating from the IX century: "Fecit autem et in atrium ante turrem sanctae Mariae ad grada quod vocatur Paradiso oraculum ante Salvatorem in honore sanctae Dei genetricis Mariae miro opere et decoravit magnifice."<sup>21</sup> The expressions "mirum opus" and "decoravit magnifice" clearly show the nature of the decoration of the building; they are almost always synonymous with mosaic-work. The presence of such a work on the façade of the *oraculum* as late as the first years of the XVII century (it was destroyed in 1610) does but confirm this hypothesis. This mosaic adorned the upper part of the façade, which was supported by Ionic columns and was between buildings of a style rather difficult to determine (perhaps added at a later date). It is thus given in the drawings that accompany the MSS. of the antiquarian Giacomo Grimaldi, apostolic notary and archivist of the basilica of St. Peter. This writer gives the following description of the mosaic: "Opus igitur ipsum musivum Pauli primi Salvatorem habebat sedentem, et sinistra librum tenentem, in quo erant litterae EGO SVM RESVRRECTIO ET VITA, in rota stellis ornata: hinc inde angeli rotam tenentes; subtus rotam Salvatoris seniores quatuor, bini per latera, offerentes coronas Salvatori, quatuor angeli sustinent rotam, et alii quatuor stant in actu volatus, supplicibus manibus versus Salvatorem, hinc inde; omnes vestiti. Musivum totum sinistrae partis seu magna pars desiderabatur; cecidit tempore Joannis XXIII Cossae, ut notat Antonius Petri in suo diario; deficit in fabricando mœniano marmoreo ad benedictiones. In Zophoro, multae litterae corruerunt, sed cum Pompeio Ugonio, insigni oratore<sup>22</sup> meique amantissimo, considerando spatia litterarum quae desiderabantur, multo antequam fabri ipsam faciem demolirentur; ita Ugonius inscriptionem eandem ad integrum est interpretatus. Litterae autem erant e musivo majusculae Romanae, licet ineptae. Nigrae remanserant, rubrae vero additae sunt, videlicet: † X. PE | TI bi SIT honor | Paulus QVOD DECO | rat opus B." <sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, p. 465.

<sup>22</sup> He is the author of that valuable work, *Historia delle Stationi di Roma*: Rome, 1588.

<sup>23</sup> *Catalogus sacrarum Reliquiarum almae Vaticanae Basilicae*, fol. 68, in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. The red letters of Grimaldi's MS., being those that were supplied, are printed in italics.



The drawing which accompanies Grimaldi's description (PL. VIII) represents Christ seated in the centre of a starry circle. His right hand is raised in the act of blessing or teaching, and his left holds the book. On each side three angels dart towards him with a motion of considerable boldness, to pay him homage. Somewhat lower are two angels of smaller dimensions, one on each side. The lower part is occupied by four figures which have the nimbus, as do all the other figures in the composition: they raise towards Christ a crown in homage. Grimaldi considers them to be the Elders of the Apocalypse (*quatuor Seniores*), but then why should we have four only instead of the 12 or 24 represented at San Paolo fuori-le-mura, at SS. Cosmo e Damiano, at Santa Prassede, on the façade of the basilica of San Pietro itself, etc.? Perhaps it may be admitted that the other figures disappeared at the time when the mosaic was made over. We know, for example, from the *Diarium* of Antonio di Pietro, that the entire left side fell, at the beginning of the xv century, under the pontificate of John XXIII.

Torrighio informs us (*op. cit.*, p. 114) that the chapel was restored by Innocent II (1130–43), and quotes the inscription of that Pope, found in 1610: “Questa Cappella fù ristaurata da Innocentio II, e nel 1610 fù trovata un’ Iscrittione in marmo, che stava nell’ altare de gli Auditori di Rota nella sala sotto il portico, che diceva :

EST IN HONORE PIAE DOMVS ISTA SACRATA MARIAE  
HOC INNOCENTI TE PRAESVLE PERFICIENTE.”

It is a well-known fact that, in the ceremony of imperial investiture, the Emperor was received by the canons in this chapel<sup>24</sup> and there took his solemn oath. This leads me to recognize an allusion to the mosaic in a hitherto obscure passage of Ugonio (*op. cit.*, p. 93, *vo.*) when he describes the entrance to the Basilica: “Passate le scale si entra in un spatio coperto: dove à man manca si vede nel muro un imagine del Signore con certe corone intorno & una croce sotto di porfido. Qui quando l’Imperatore si coronava in S. Pietro, si solea drizzare un’ altare; & si eleggeva Canonico di S. Pietro con certe solenni cerimonie.”

**VATICAN.—TOMB OF SAINT SIXTUS I.**—The *Liber Pontificalis* tells us: “Paschalis in basilica (S. Petri) ante aditum qui ducit ad corpus in loco Ferrata, altare constituit, in quo et venerandum beati

<sup>24</sup> See Torrighio, p. 586.

Sixti martyris atque pontificis corpus honestissime collocavit, ubi et desuper arcum musivo exornatum decenter instruxit" (*in vita Paschalis I*, § v).

Petrus Mallius speaks more than once of this mosaic executed under Pope Pascal: "Xystus Papa fuit sepultus juxta ferratam prope corpus beati Petri ubi adhuc est arcus de musibo, quem fecit fieri Paschalis Papa primus (p. 62). Altare beati Xysti I quod est in introitu Basilicæ beati Petri juxta ferratam, super quod altare est arcus ex mirifico musivo, sicut legitur in vita Paschalis I Papæ" (p. 107). In the time of Mapheus Vegius the tomb of Sixtus I still existed; for he tells us (p. 81) that it was newly brought to light, together with those of St. Leo and of Hadrian, on the occasion of the works undertaken by Nicholas V: "Dum fundamenta ubi immensa novi operis imperfecti moles requiesceret, a Nicolao V aperirentur, reperiuntur ibi subterraneæ cellæ ornatissimæ quæ, superjecta ingenti rudium congerie, intra viscera terræ absconditæ, penitus ignotæ erant. Sane primum ipsum oratorium S. Sixti est, quod respicit suggestum, ubi Evangelium cantatur; de quo dicit Paschalis Papa, post deprædationem coemeterii Calisti positum fuisse, ubi corpus B. Sixti martyris ante corpus B. Petri juxta septa ferrea, super quod et factum altare, lapidibus ornatum, et super altare arcus ex miro musivo; quæ sicut ille dicit adhuc hodie apparent."

Writers of the XVI and XVII centuries also mention this arch as covered with mosaics, but without describing it. No vestige of it remains.

#### VATICAN.—ORATORY OF SS. PROCESSUS AND MARTINIANUS.

—"Simili modo in eadem sacratissima beati Petri apostoli ecclesia, juxta ingressum qui ducit ad beatam Petronillam, oratorium summae magnitudinis atque pulchritudinis decoranter construxit: et super columnas in quadrificio cameranter musivo pulchrisque metallis decoravit. In eo et corpora beatissimorum martyrum Processi et Martiniani recondidit."<sup>25</sup> It is in these terms that the *Liber Pontificalis* speaks of this work.

Mallius (p. 54) devotes a few lines to the oratory of the two saints: "juxta portam aeneam qua itur ad sanctam Petronillam et ad sanctum Andream, est oratorium sanctorum Processi et Martiniani martyrum, musibo et diversis lapidibus decoratum."

<sup>25</sup> *Lib. Pont., in vita Paschalis I*, § v.

Mapheus Vegius (*ubi supra*), also, was still able to study this interesting work of the IX century, of which, unfortunately, he did not think it necessary to give a description: "ultra portam aeneam quae ducit ad altare sanctae Petronillae, est eximium oratorium, quod ex musivo egregie fabricatum erexit Paschalis Papa in honorem Processi et Martiniani."

Finally, a French Cardinal who died in 1470, Richard de Normandie, willed a considerable sum for the decoration of this oratory, where he wished to be buried.<sup>26</sup> Grimaldi relates that the unconsecrating of the altar took place in 1605: "Sub eodem pontifice (Paulo V) inter multa ac praeclara tantae basilicae monumenta quae perierunt etiam insigne SS. Processi et Martiniani martyrum oratorium opere vermiculato lapidibus ac metallis decoratum solo aequatum fuit."<sup>27</sup>

On this last point the assertion of Chattard,<sup>28</sup> who places the destruction of the oratory under the pontificate of Julius II, must be corrected.

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF ST. GREGORY.**—The *Liber Pontificalis* attributes to Gregory IV (827–44) the decoration of this monument (*in vita*, § VI): "(Gregorius IV) corpus beati Gregorii ex loco, sepulchrum quo prius fuerat, tulit, et non longe ab eo in alium noviter constructum infra ecclesiam beati Petri apostoli summo honore perduxit. Ejusque sacrum altare argenteis tabulis undique ornavit, et oratorium in suo sancto nomine titulavit absidamque ejus desuper aurato musivo depinxit." Mallius (p. 78) mentions the oratory of St. Gregory, but without speaking of the mosaics which adorned it.

The historians of the basilica are not in accord as to the site occupied by this oratory. While some, like Severano,<sup>29</sup> place it on the right of the portico of the church, others seek to identify it with the chapel of Santa Maria delle Febbri, built and adorned with mosaics by the same pope, Gregory IV.

**VATICAN.—ORATORY OF ST. LEO.**—This oratory is known by a passage of the *Liber Pontificalis*, *in vita Leonis IV*, § XXXI: "Ipse quidem a Deo protectus et venerabilis praesul intra basilicam beati Petri apostoli oraculum mirae pulchritudinis, summique decoris construxit, quod pulchris marmoribus circumdans splendide composuit absidamque ejus ex musivo aureo superinducto colore glorificè deco-

<sup>26</sup> Grimaldi, MS. of Barberini Library, xxxiv, No. 49, ff. 11–12.—<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* fol. 10.

<sup>28</sup> *Nuova descrizione del Vaticano*: Rome, 1762, t. I, p. 67.

<sup>29</sup> *Memorie sacre delle sette chiese*, p. 67.

ravit, in quo etiam corpus beati Leonis confessoris, atque pontificis recondens," etc.

**THE LATERAN BASILICA.**—The Lateran, like the Vatican, was from the time of its foundation a great centre for mosaic painting. Its mosaic series may be divided into three parts, into those which decorated (1) the Basilica itself, (2) the Baptistery and its dependencies, (3) the various buildings of the pontifical palace, especially the triclinia and oratories.

No records of Constantinian mosaics exist, as at the Vatican, and the earliest known is doubtless that still to be seen in the Chapel of SS. Rufina and Secondina, attributed by De Rossi to about 400 A. D. From that time, however, until the decline of mosaic painting the Lateran basilica possessed a complete and uninterrupted series of works. Here was placed the last work executed by the Roman school of the early Middle Ages,—the mosaics of the nave executed by Sergius III about the year 907; a work of which no notice has ever been taken by art historians; that of Santa Maria in Trastevere, executed under Benedict III (855–58), having been considered the last mosaic of this school.

Here, again, I must commence by referring the reader to previous works. A notice of the apsidal mosaic of the basilica appeared in the *Revue Archéologique* (Nov. 1878, Aug. 1879, Sept. 1882); another, of the triclinium of the apostolic palace, in the same Review (Jan. 1884).

**LATERAN.—ORATORY OF THE HOLY CROSS.**—Saint Hilary (461–68) raised three oratories by the side of the baptistery of the Lateran. Two of these, joined to and communicating with this edifice, still remain: the oratory of John the Baptist and that of St. John the Evangelist. The third, that of the Holy Cross, which was placed at a certain distance from the baptistery, on the right hand coming from the square of the Lateran, has disappeared. “Fecit oratoria tria in baptisterio basilicæ Constantinianæ, S. Johannis Baptistæ, S. Johannis Evangelistæ et S. Crucis. . . Nymphaeum et triporticum [fecit] ante oratorium S. Crucis . . . undique ornatum ex musibo et columnis aquitanicis et tripolititis et purphyreticis.”<sup>30</sup>

Several inscriptions complete the evidence as to the part which St. Hilary had in all these works. Over the door of the oratory of St.

<sup>30</sup> *Lib. Pont.*; ed. Duchesne, pp. 242, 243; cf. Note 3, p. 245.

John the Evangelist we still read : LIBERATORI SVO BEATO JOHANNI EVANGELISTAE HILARVS EPISCOPVS FAMVLVS XPI. Over that of the oratory of John the Baptist : HILARVS EPISCOPVS DEI FAMVLVS OFFERT.

Of the mosaics executed in these different edifices, the *Liber Pontificalis*, as we have seen, mentions only those of the nymphaeum placed in front of the oratory of the Holy Cross. But we know that for the first five or six centuries of the Christian era the papal chronicle does not pride itself on a strict exactitude. It is therefore allowable to supplement its silence by means of data furnished by the style of the works themselves. At least in that one of these works which has survived, the style is that of the mosaics of the time of St. Hilary, as I will soon show.

The oratory of the Holy Cross was destroyed at the time of the last restoration of the Lateran, under Sixtus V : "Questo luogo et Capelle, essendo del tutto rovinate e desolate, . . è parso il meglio in quest' ultima restauratione del Laterano si levassero."<sup>31</sup> At the epoch in which Panvinio wrote it had already lost the greater part of its riches (*op. cit.*, p. 165) : "Nunc magna ex parte omnibus ornamentis suis, et marmoreis etiam spoliatum est; et eorum loco repositae sunt inepti artificis picturae."

Nevertheless, we know what the mosaics of this oratory represented, thanks to Severano and Cardinal Rasponi. As their descriptions complete each other, I will reproduce both of them : "La volta era ornata di mosaico, con quattro Angeli nei cantoni, li quali sostenevano una croce. Trà le quattro finestre, che vi erano, si vedevano le immagini (parimente di mosaico) di SS. Pietro e Paolo, Gio: Battista, Gio: Evangelista, Jacomo, Filippo, Lorenzo, e Stephano; e nelli muri delle Tribune medesime, coperti di marmi, i segni della santissima Croce."<sup>32</sup> Rasponi says : "Tectum concameratum opere musivo aureo elegantissimo expictum erat, visebanturque ad angulos quatuor Angeli qui ingentem crucem sustinebant. Super absidas, paulo infra testudinem, fenestrae quatuor peramplae aperiebantur, ac in earum interstitiis ex musivo opere SS. apostolorum Petri ac Pauli, S. Joannis Evangelistae, S. Joannis Baptistae, SS. martyrum Laurentii et Stephani, nec non Jacobi et Philippi imagines extabant."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> P. Ugonio, *Historia delle stationi di Roma* : Rome, 1588, p. 46, ro.

<sup>32</sup> Severano, *op. cit.*, t. I, p. 499.

<sup>33</sup> Rasponi, *De Basilica et Patriarchio Lateranensi*, p. 232. Cf. Grimaldi, *Cod. Ambros.* A 178, fol. 36 vo.

**LATERAN.—ORATORY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.**—The oratory of John the Baptist, situated on the right hand of the baptistery as you enter from the square of the Lateran, has not fallen under the pick of the hireling demolishers of Sixtus V, but it has, nevertheless, lost its primitive decoration. Clement VIII, and later Francesco Mattei, patriarch of Alexandria (1727), restored and adorned it with new paintings.<sup>34</sup> It was doubtless on the occasion of the “embellishments” of the latter that the oratory was despoiled of its mosaics. Both Panvinio and Cardinal Rasponi praise the elegance of this ornamentation: “Testudo tota è musivo pulcherrimo” (Panvinio, *op. cit.*, p. 159): “Concameratio elegantissime intersecta cernitur opere musivo” (Rasponi, *op. cit.*, p. 226). Ciampini has done better by giving us an engraving of it.<sup>35</sup>

In the centre of the composition, that is to say, at the summit of the vault, was seen the nimbed Lamb standing in the midst of a garland of laurel leaves; while all around was a rich ornamentation which recalls the paintings of the catacombs,—flowers, arabesques, various birds, peacocks, doves bearing in their beak an olive-branch; lower down, on the right and left of each of the two windows of the oratory, stood an evangelist, holding open the sacred book, accompanied by the animal which is consecrated to him.

**LATERAN.—ORATORY OF ST. PETER.**—“Gregorius II (715–31) oratorium Osannae in patriarchio in nomine beati Petri apostoli diversis ornatum metallis, a novo fecit.” It is in these terms that the *Liber Pontificalis* (*vita S. Greg. II*, § IX) mentions the construction of this oratory. I would not have thought of translating the word *metalla* by “mosaics,” as it is often used with the meaning “marbles,”<sup>36</sup> if Onofrio Panvinio, in his manuscript history of the Lateran, had not solved the difficulty.<sup>37</sup> In the chapter entitled *De oratorio sancti Petri in patriarchio Lateranensi*, he expresses himself on this subject in the following manner: “Gregorius II, ut Anastasius tradit, oratorium diversis ornavit metallis, id est opere musivo.”

<sup>34</sup> Valentini and Gerardi, *La Patriarcale Basilica Lateranense*: Rome, 1832, t. II, p. 71: “Queste due capelle vennero ristorate ed abbellite con pittura ed altri ornamenti dalla S. M. di Clemente VIII, ed in seguito nel 1727 da Francesco dei Duchi Mattei Patriarcha di Alessandria, come risulta da lapidi che in esse legonsi.”

<sup>35</sup> *Vetera Monumenta*, t. I, pl. LXXV.

<sup>36</sup> Examples will be found in Vignoli's edition of the *Liber Pontificalis*, t. I, p. 366; t. II, p. 382.

<sup>37</sup> Barberini Library, MS. No. XLIX, 14, p. 263 vo.

The opinion of a scholar so well versed as was Panvinio in the history of the ancient papal palace is worthy of serious consideration. In his time there remained no more traces of the oratory of Gregory II: "Hujus oratorii vestigium nullum quod sciam extat."

**LATERAN.—ORATORY OF THE ARCHANGEL.**—The *Liber Pontificalis*, so well informed as to everything that relates to the IX century, attributes to Leo III the foundation of the oratory of the Archangel in the Lateran palace: "(Leo III) fecit in patriarchio Lateranensi oratorium a fundamentis in honorem beati Archangeli, insigni opere firmissime construens, quod etiam ex musivo seu diversis picturis atque pulcherrimis marmorum metallis diversis coloribus ornavit undique."<sup>38</sup>

This oratory was destroyed in 1613, according to Grimaldi.<sup>39</sup> Rasponi<sup>40</sup> reports that he saw a fragment of the inscription placed on the façade, which was thus worded: HOC ORATORIUM A FVNDAMENTIS CVRANTE V. LEVITA PETRI AD HONOREM FIERI JVSSIT LEO. I have not been able to discover the subject of the mosaic mentioned by the papal chronicle.

**LATERAN.—TRICLINIUM OF GREGORY IV.**—This Pope, who reigned from 827 to 844, added to the palace of the Lateran a triclinium whose magnificence is thus praised by the *Liber Pontificalis* (*in vita Greg. IV*, § XV): "Fecit in patriarchio Lateranensi triclinium mirae magnitudinis decoratum cum absida de musivo, seu et alias absidas duas dextra laevaque positas infra paracellarium variis historiis depictas."

**SANT' AGATA IN SUBURRA.**—In the apse of the church of Saint Agatha in Suburra, or "super suburram," there was still to be read, towards the close of the XVI century, the following inscription, which has been preserved by Ciacconio in his collection of drawings,<sup>41</sup> and by Baronius in the Martyrology:<sup>42</sup> FL. RICIMER V. I. MAGISTER VTRIVSQUE MILITIAE ET EX CONSVL. ORD. PRO VOTO SVO ADORNAVIT. The word *adornavit* authorizes us to believe that Ricimer did

<sup>38</sup> *In vita Leonis III*, § XCII-II, 303. <sup>39</sup> Ambrosian Library, MS. A. 178, fol. 8 vo.

<sup>40</sup> *De Basilica et Patriarchio Lateranensi*. He has supplied the lacunae by means of Ugono's *Historia delle Stazioni di Roma*.

<sup>41</sup> Vatican Library, *Latin MSS.* No. 5,407 *et seq.* It is known that this precious collection was brought to light by Commend. De Rossi. Copies of Ciacconio's drawings are to be found at the Ambrosian Library, Milan.

<sup>42</sup> Edition of Venice, 1621, p. 93, Feb. 5.

not build the church, but only had the mosaics executed, which, after having existed until the time of Clement VIII,<sup>43</sup> have been rescued from oblivion, thanks to the learned Ciacconio. The Arian general gained in 456 his great victory over the Alani, and it is possible that it was in consequence of a vow made on this occasion that these mosaics were executed. In any case, their origin cannot be posterior to 472, the year of Ricimer's death.

A series of thirteen drawings of the XVI century, slightly colored, each representing an isolated figure,—this is all that remains from this interesting work. The figures are those of Christ and the twelve apostles. At the beginning of the series, there is a note which I here transcribe: "In aede S. Agathae ad Suburra in abside istius ecclesiae sunt Christus et XII apostoli, sex a dextris et sex a sinistris; quod opus fieri fecit Flavius Ricimerus . . . quae pictura in mosaico antiquior multo est, ut existimo, ipso S. Gregorio P. P. Paulus IV Pont. max. non levibus rationibus permotus, solebat dicere picturas has esse veras apostolorum effigies, id quod certe comprobant sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, quae omnino sunt similes iis quae pro certis et indubitatis in Vaticana basilica asservantur. Opus vermiculatum seu mosaicum vulgo dictum in aede S. Agathae in Suburra, quod nuper cecidit et picturis suppletum est anno D. MDICV."<sup>44</sup>

According to the drawings which reproduce them, the following is the order of the figures.—S. IACOBVS ALPHEI, beardless, with hair cut straight across the forehead, near the eyebrows. His costume, as well as that of all the other apostles, was composed of a bluish tunic ("stolae coerulei coloris," Ciamp. *Vet. Mon.* t. I, p. 272) across which run lengthwise two bands of a darker blue; then, a mantle shaded with brown, adorned with those enigmatical letters which have been the despair of so many archæologists (on these figures an **L** is generally used); finally, sandals. His left hand is hidden under his mantle, his right is extended naturally, as if he were conversing with his neighbor. Neither he nor the other apostles have the nimbus.—S. SIMON

<sup>43</sup> Writers are not in accord as to the period when the apse of Sant' Agata in Suburra fell to ruin, and with it the mosaics. Baronius, *Annales*, 472, No. 11; and Nibby, *Roma nell' anno 1838*, p. 331; relate that it was in 1589. Ciampini, *Vetera Monumenta*, t. II, p. 271; and Gregorovius, *Storia della città di Roma*, t. I, p. 262; contend, on the contrary, that it was in 1592.

<sup>44</sup> Martinelli was acquainted with the passage relating to Paul IV, and reproduces it in his *Diaconia S. Agatae in Suburra*, p. LVIII.



ZELOTES holds the roll (volumen) with both hands, the right uncovered, the left being covered by his robe; chestnut beard.—S. IACOBVS, chestnut beard and hair. His left hand is draped in the folds of his garment, the right hand raised.—S. IVDAS IACOBI: while the preceding apostles are turned towards the right, this one is turned to the left. He is having an animated discussion with St. James. His attitude is excellently drawn.—S. PHILIPPVS: hair brown, beard rather long and of the same color. It would appear that he was tonsured.—S. PAVLVS holds with his left hand the volumen: he extends the right hand towards Christ, as if to question him. His beard is brown and very long; hair also brown.—SALVS TOTIVS GENERIS HVMANI: the Christ is seated on the azure globe: on his left hand rests the open book, which he shows to the faithful; with the right hand, slightly raised and the palm turned outward, he appears to expound the sacred text: his gesture is full of gentleness and persuasion. His vesture consists of a blue tunic with a wide yellow *clavus*, a violet mantle, and sandals. He has long curling brown hair, silky beard divided in the middle, and a yellow nimbus.—S. PETRVS advances towards Christ with a hasty step, bearing on his mantle the key, symbol of his office. His figure is broad and robust; he has curly white beard and hair.<sup>45</sup>—S. ANDREAS faces frontward, with beard cut rather short, hair dishevelled and a brusque manner; he holds the roll (volumen) in his right hand, supporting it with his left hand which is veiled.—S. IOHANNES faces frontward, with a sentimental expression. He has long curling hair and a blond beard. With his uncovered right hand he holds the volumen unrolled. His physiognomy is that of a youth, and not of the old man that we see in the engraving of Ciampini.—S. THOMAS raises his hand with the last two fingers bent. His hair is cut close, and he has a brown beard.—S. MATTHÆVS: in his veiled left hand we see the volumen, while with his raised right hand he makes a gesture

<sup>45</sup> Misled by Ciampini's engraving, Abbé Martigny (*Dict. des Antiq. Chrét.* p. 423) thought that St. Peter wore a tiara: this is not so. The same remark applies to the supposed tiaras of the Apostles in the Baptistery of the Orthodox at Ravenna: in reality they are nothing else than folds of hangings suspended behind their heads. Here, also, one of Ciampini's engravings has led into error not only the above-named scholar (*Dict.* p. 45), but also Von Quast (*Ravenna*, p. 5), Schnaase (*Gesch. d. bild. Künste*, 1st ed., t. III, p. 181), Unger (*Encycl. Ersch & Gruber*, vol. LXXXIV, p. 391, col. 1), and Canina (*Ric. sull' architettura più propria dei tempi cristiani*: Roma, 1846, pl. civ).

as if to demonstrate something.—S. BARTOLOMÆVS is slightly bent, of youthful appearance, beardless and with hair cut close.

These figures are separated in the copies at the Vatican : Ciampini had the happy idea of grouping them on the same sheet (*Vet. Mon.* t. I, pl. LXXVII) so as to reconstitute the ensemble of the mosaic. Their attitude and their gestures indicate the order in which they were originally arranged, and this project of reconstitution has every possible guarantee of trustworthiness. It shows with what talent and consummate knowledge the mosaicists of Ricimer gave animation to the scene without violating the laws of style and of monumental decoration. The idea which the artists wished to make the ruling one, is that of the procession of the apostles in two groups towards the Saviour of mankind. But at every instant comes an episode, so to speak, to interrupt the uniformity of the action and charm the fancy, without obscuring the main motive. Thus, for example, St. Jude turns back toward his neighbor, carried away by the heat of discussion ; and St. Andrew stops in front of the spectator, as if suddenly impressed by an idea. Such motives, while they accentuate the character of each one of the disciples of the Divine Master, at the same time contribute to the general composition a peculiar force and zest.

Remarkable, also, is the thoroughly antique elegance of the draperies, and the felicitous role given by the artist to the left hand, which usually holds the mantle so as to let it fall down in picturesque folds. It may be said that the entire style forms a most remarkable intermediary between the too violent action of the primitive mosaics (*e. g.* that of the Baptistry of the Orthodox at Ravenna) and the heaviness of the following period, already so near to the stiffness and immobility of the Middle Ages proper. As for the types, they show a feeling both for beauty and for character. But I think it would be dangerous to confide too blindly in these copies of the XVI century. Their author seems to have been influenced by the great creations of the Renaissance. It is to be feared that he may have seen the apostles of Saint Agatha in Suburra through the medium of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper ; the air of some of the heads recalls directly the immortal fresco of *Santa Maria delle Grazie*. However this may be, if these copies were but a feeble echo of the original, it would be none the less interesting to reproduce in more satisfactory

engravings than those of Ciampini these very rare vestiges of the Arian painting of the fifth century.

Gregory the Great (590–604), having again consecrated this church and restored it to orthodox worship, wished also to embellish it. In doing so, he employed both enamelled cubes and fresco-painting. Pope Hadrian, in his well-known letter to Charlemagne, recalls these creations of his illustrious predecessor: “*Ecclesia Arianorum, cujus ipse sanctus Gregorius in dialogis suis meminit, placuit eidem sancto Gregorio ut in fide catholica, introductis illic beatis Sebastiani et sanctae Agathae martyrum reliquiis, dedicari debuisset, quod et factum est: diversis historiis ipse beatus Gregorius pingi fecit eam, tam in musivo quam in coloribus, et venerandas imagines ibidem erexit: et a tunc usque hactenus venerantur.*”<sup>46</sup> The two “images” which the anonymous author of the *Itinerary of Einsiedeln* saw in the VIII century in the church of Sant’ Agata doubtless formed a part of the works executed by St. Gregory: “*Sca. Agatha ibi imagines Pauli et sanctae Mariae sub. (suburra?) Thermae Constantini.*”<sup>47</sup> The mosaics or paintings in question remained until about the beginning of the XVII century, as is proved by a passage in Martinelli (*op. cit.*, p. LXVI): “*Gregorianum venerabile opus picturis, sacrisque imaginibus expressum permansit ad aevum nostrum, quo edaci tempori cedens, ac fere ad confusa lineamenta redactum, M. Antonius Gozadinus albario opere perpolvit.*”

It is doubly to be regretted that these works have perished, for Gregory the Great, as is well known, did not execute any great number; preferring the works of faith to monuments in marble or brass.

**SANTI APOSTOLI.**—Pelagius I (555–61) began the erection of the church of the Holy Apostles (St. Philip and St. James), but he died before having finished it.<sup>48</sup> John III (561–74) continued and completed the work of his predecessor.<sup>49</sup> That this church was ornamented with mosaics is proved by a passage in the letter addressed by Pope Hadrian to Charlemagne on the subject of the second council of Nicaea: “*Multo amplius vero dominus Pelagius atque*

<sup>46</sup> Labbe, *Sac. Concilia*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>47</sup> Urlichs, *Codex urbis Romae topographicus*: Wurtzburg, 1871, p. 70.

<sup>48</sup> *Lib. Pont.*, in *vita Pelagii*, ed. Duchesne, p. 303.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, in *vita Johan. III.*, p. 305. Vignoli is in error, when he says, in his edition of the *Liber Pontificalis*, t. I, p. 359, that John III finished the church begun by his predecessor Sergius.

dominus Joannes mirae magnitudinis ecclesiam Apostolorum a solo aedificantes historias diversas, tam in musivo, quam in variis coloribus cum sacris pingentes imaginibus, et a tunc usque hactenus a nobis venerantur.”<sup>50</sup> Nibby,<sup>51</sup> who passes over in silence the execution of these mosaics, publishes from Marini (*Papiri diplomatici*, p. 103) two inscriptions formerly placed, the one on the arch of triumph, the other in the apse. The first is thus worded:

PELAGIVS CEPIT COMPLEVIT PAPA IOANNES

VNVM OPVS AMBORVM PAR MICAT ET MERITVM.

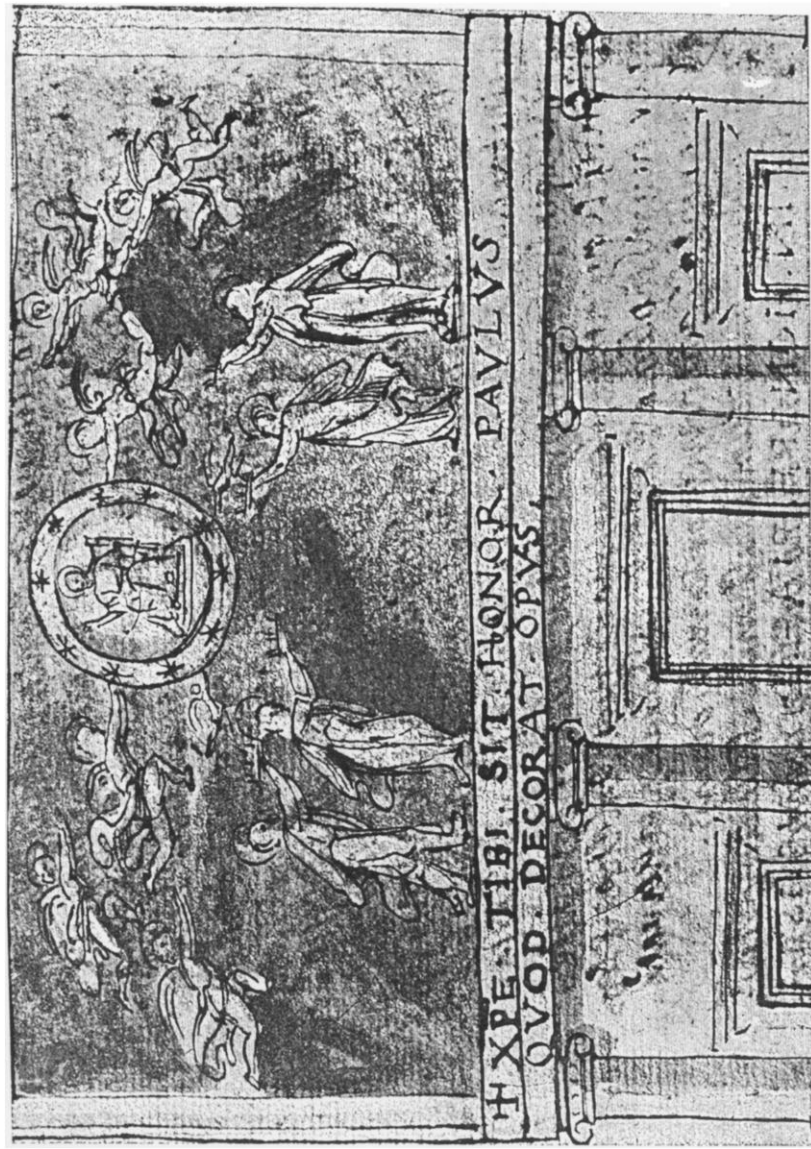
The apse of this church was restored by Hadrian I (*Lib. Pont. in vita Had.*, § L): “Absidam cernens jam ruinae vicinam existentem cancalis ferreis eamdem absidam confirmare fecit, et ita eam renovavit.” In 886, under Stephen V, took place a new restoration, and again another under Martin V (1417–31). Finally, about 1475, Sixtus IV almost entirely rebuilt this venerable edifice. There is little probability that after this there remained anything of the mosaics of Pelagius I and John III.

EUGÈNE MÜNTZ.

[To be continued.]

<sup>50</sup> Labbe, *Sacrosancta Concilia*: ed. of Venice, 1729, t. VIII, p. 1553 *et seq.*

<sup>51</sup> *Roma nell' anno 1838*; parte mod. t. I, p. 108. These inscriptions are preserved in a MS. of the xv cent. in the Vatican Library. Cf. Martinelli, *Roma ex ethnica sacra*: Rome, 1653, p. 64 *et seq.*



MOSAIC OF PAUL I IN S. MARIA IN TURRI.

(Vatican Basilica, Rome.)